



Dental (periodontal) disease in cats and dogs

AN OWNER'S GUIDE



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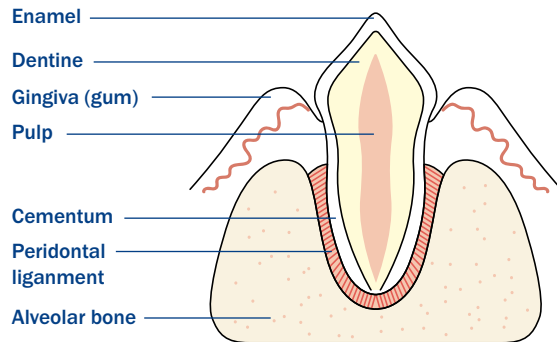


Animalcare
United Kingdom

What is periodontal disease?

Periodontal disease is infection of the tissues surrounding the teeth, such as the gums (gingiva), the ligament that holds the tooth in place and even the bony socket that the tooth sits in.

Cross section of a dog's tooth, showing the dental and periodontal tissues:



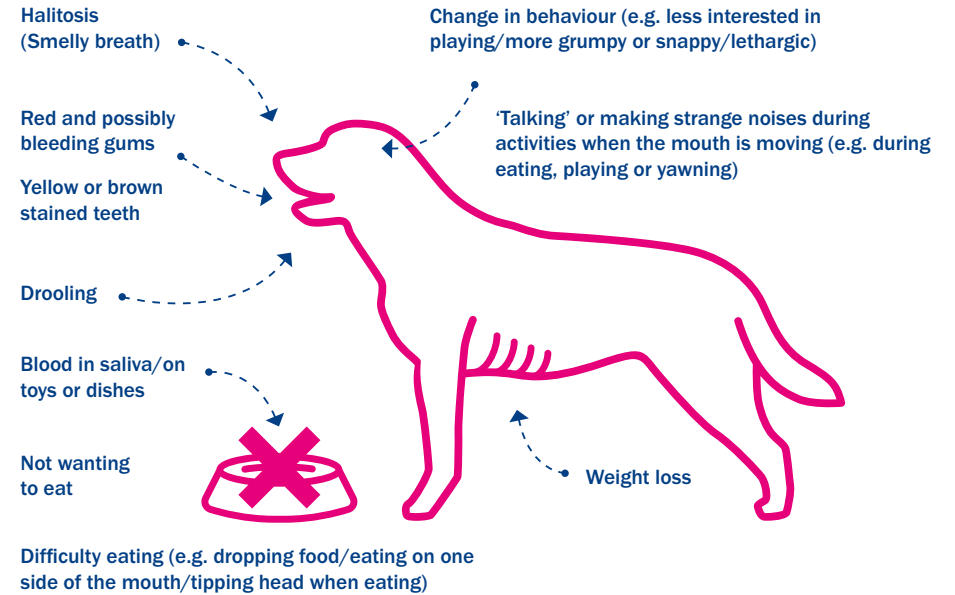
What causes periodontal disease?

Plaque is a sticky film of saliva, food particles and bacteria that covers the teeth. It can build up on teeth and harden to form a brown substance called tartar. Plaque and tartar cause inflammation of the gums, making them red and painful.

This inflammation (called gingivitis) is reversible if the plaque and tartar are carefully removed. In pets, this often needs to be done under general anaesthetic to make sure that plaque and tartar are removed from all sides of the teeth and below the gum line.

If gingivitis is left untreated, it can progress to periodontitis – a more severe infection of the periodontal tissues that can cause irreversible changes. Without treatment, periodontitis results in severe pain and eventual tooth loss. Bacteria can even enter the bloodstream via the tooth roots, causing infection elsewhere in the body.

What are the signs of periodontal disease?



It is important to remember that periodontal disease tends to get worse over a period of time, so signs often won't appear suddenly, so may be easy to miss.



How can you help your pet when it comes to periodontal disease?

1. Check your pet's teeth and mouth regularly for signs of dental disease.
2. Visit your vet if you are worried about your pet's teeth/mouth and at least once a year for a dental check (this can be part of their vaccination health check).
3. Act on early signs of periodontal disease. It may seem over the top to go ahead with a dental procedure under general anaesthetic if your pet does not seem affected by teeth problems but remember that early-stage disease is completely reversible and as disease advances, it becomes harder and harder to treat .
4. **Proactive dental care at home.** This includes regularly checking your pet's teeth and mouth and taking steps to keep their teeth clean. Brushing your pet's teeth daily with a pet specific toothpaste is the single best way to keep them free of dental disease.

TOP TOOTH BRUSHING TIPS

- **Start young!** Get your puppy or kitten used to having their mouth handled from a young age and tooth brushing will be a breeze. That's not to say that older pets can't learn new tricks – with a bit of gentle patience, there will be nothing but smiles when the toothbrush comes out!
- **Build up slowly:** Start by gently lifting your pets lip and giving lots of praise/reward. Over time, move onto rubbing their gums with your finger and some toothpaste. Once they are happy with this, you can introduce a finger brush. For larger pets, the next step is introducing a soft bristled toothbrush to cover more ground quicker
- **Choose the right toothpaste.** Be sure to only use toothpaste designed for pets. Human toothpaste is too abrasive for cat and dog teeth and the foaming action often upsets them. Plus, they usually much prefer other flavours to mint!

More than just a toothpaste

With its low abrasive, non-foaming formula and tasty malt flavour, Orozyme Oral Hygiene Gel is the perfect plaque-busting pet toothpaste.

But thanks to its trusted multi-enzyme system that is capable of suppressing plaque forming bacteria³ and a special formulation that keeps the active ingredients in contact with the teeth and gums for longer, Orozyme Oral Hygiene Gel can **reduce plaque levels, even without brushing!**

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